

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as indicated below, without prejudice:

1. (Currently amended) A nail comprising:

a proximal portion and a distal portion, said proximal portion and said distal portion defining a longitudinal axis, wherein said proximal portion comprises a plurality of segments along said longitudinal axis, each of said plurality of segments having an opening;

wherein at least one of said plurality of segments is rotatable with respect to said distal portion about said longitudinal axis;

wherein the nail comprises an insert in at least one of the openings for supporting a bone screw.

2. (Original) The nail of claim 1, wherein said plurality of segments comprise a first segment, a second segment, and a third segment.

3. (Original) The nail of claim 2, wherein said first segment is non-rotatably attached to said distal portion of said nail.

4. (Original) The nail of claim 1, further comprising means for locking said at least one rotatable segment for preventing said at least one rotatable segment from rotating with respect to said distal portion.

5. (Currently amended) A nail comprising:
a proximal portion and a distal portion, said proximal
portion and said distal portion defining a longitudinal axis,
wherein said proximal portion comprises a plurality of segments
along said longitudinal axis, each of said plurality of segments
having an opening;

wherein at least one of said plurality of segments is
rotatable with respect to said distal portion about said
longitudinal axis;

wherein said nail further comprises means for locking said
at least one rotatable segment for preventing said at least one
rotatable segment from rotating with respect to said distal
portion; and

~~The nail of claim 4,~~ wherein said means for locking said at least one rotatable segment comprises a locking ring.

6. (Original) The nail of claim 5, wherein said locking ring comprises a threaded interior surface.

7. (Original) The nail of claim 5, wherein said locking ring comprises a tapered interior surface for creating a taper lock.

8. (Original) The nail of claim 5, wherein said locking ring comprises one or more tool openings for receiving a tool to apply a force to the locking ring.

9. (Original) The nail of claim 2, wherein the first segment and the second segment each comprise a sidewall defining a chamber.

10. (Original) The nail of claim 9, wherein the second segment and the third segment each comprise a connector for being received in said chamber.

11. (Currently amended) A nail comprising:
a proximal portion and a distal portion, said proximal
portion and said distal portion defining a longitudinal axis,
wherein said proximal portion comprises a plurality of segments
along said longitudinal axis, each of said plurality of segments
having an opening;

wherein at least one of said plurality of segments is
rotatable with respect to said distal portion about said
longitudinal axis;

wherein said plurality of segments comprise a first segment, a second segment, and a third segment;

wherein the first segment and the second segment each comprise a sidewall defining a chamber;

wherein the second segment and the third segment each comprise a connector for being received in said chamber; and

~~The nail of claim 10,~~ wherein the connectors each comprise a ledge, and the chambers each comprise a slot for receiving the ledge.

12. (Original) The nail of claim 10, wherein the sidewalls comprise a plurality of slits for allowing the sidewalls to deflect.

13. (Currently amended) A nail comprising:
a proximal portion and a distal portion, said proximal portion and said distal portion defining a longitudinal axis,
wherein said proximal portion comprises a plurality of segments along said longitudinal axis, each of said plurality of segments having an opening;

wherein at least one of said plurality of segments is rotatable with respect to said distal portion about said longitudinal axis;

wherein said plurality of segments comprise a first segment,
a second segment, and a third segment;

wherein the first segment and the second segment each
comprise a sidewall defining a chamber; and

~~The nail of claim 9,~~ wherein the sidewalls comprise a
threaded exterior surface.

14. (Original) The nail of claim 9, wherein the sidewalls
comprise a tapered exterior surface.

15. (Original) The nail of claim 10, further comprising a
projection on an exterior surface of the connectors, and a groove
on an interior surface of the sidewalls to provide an
interference fit between the sidewalls and the connectors.

16. (Original) The nail of claim 5, wherein the locking ring
comprises a polygonal shape to facilitate applying a torque to
the locking ring.

17. (Original) The nail of claim 1, wherein the nail further
comprises a notch disposed on a proximal end for receiving a
tool.

18. (Original) The nail of claim 1, wherein at least one of said openings in said plurality of segments is disposed at a non-perpendicular angle with respect to said longitudinal axis.

19. (Original) The nail of claim 1, wherein the openings each comprise a substantially oval shape to allow a bone screw to be inserted into the openings in a range of angles with respect to the longitudinal axis.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Original) The nail of claim 1, wherein at least one of said plurality of segments comprises a connector having a recess, and wherein a pin is receivable in said recess to prevent said connector from rotating with respect to said pin.

22. (Original) The nail of claim 21, wherein said pin comprises a reduced diameter portion and an enlarged diameter portion, and wherein said enlarged diameter portion comprises threads.

23. (Original) The nail of claim 1, further comprising a first attachment element for preventing said at least one segment from rotating with respect to said distal portion.

24. (Original) The nail of claim 23, wherein said plurality of segments comprises a first segment having a threaded surface and a second segment having a shoulder, and wherein said first attachment element comprises a head and a threaded shaft such that said threaded shaft is configured to engage with said threaded surface and said head is configured to abut said shoulder to prevent said second segment from rotating with respect to said first segment.

25. (Original) The nail of claim 1, wherein said distal portion is formed at an angle with respect to said longitudinal axis of up to approximately 10 degrees.

26. (Currently amended) An intramedullary nail for treating bone fractures, said intramedullary nail comprising:

a proximal portion and a distal portion, said proximal portion and said distal portion defining a longitudinal axis, wherein said proximal portion comprises at least one segment that is rotatable with respect to said distal portion about said longitudinal axis; and

means for locking said at least one segment for preventing said at least one segment from rotating with respect to said distal portion;

wherein said means for locking said at least one segment
comprises a locking ring.

Claims 27-30 (Canceled)